The Jewish Life of the Messiah

A harmonic study of the Four Gospels
INTRODUCTION TO THE HARMONY AND OUTLINE

Course Textbook

A Harmony of the Gospels by Thomas and Gundry.

Robert L. Thomas and Stanley N. Gundry chose to divide up the life of Messiah into the sections you will see on the HaDavar outline.

The Harmony’s outline is on page 7 of the book.

The section numbers beginning on page 7 correspond to the numbers on the HaDavar outline.

I’ll refer to the section numbers for those of you with the Harmony book.

I’ll refer to the Scripture verses for those of you without the book.

Approach:

Geographical

Traditional approach

- the early, middle and later Galilean ministry;
- the early, middle and later Judean ministry;
- and the early, middle and later Perean ministry

Drawback

- miss the relationships between incidents
- The relationship between two incidents may not be apparent because of the geographical approach.

Thematic

- note important themes
- note the relationship of one section to another, of one event to the next.
**Jewish Backgrounds**

The Judaism that Jesus faced was the Judaism of the Pharisees.

Many statements that are made are often misunderstood, not because the words are unclear, but because people don’t understand the Jewish thinking behind the statement.

Too many commentators have a tendency to go back into Roman and Greek tradition and culture when dealing with a statement.

The gospels take place in the context of Jewish culture and tradition.

The issues being faced were prominent in the Jewish culture of Jesus’ day.

Jesus’ claim of kingship and its subsequent rejection will be heavily related to Pharisaic Judaism.

Also, many statements the Gentile Believers argue about become quite clear when viewed in its Jewish context.

An expression like “born again” can only be fully understood when it is put into the Jewish thinking and culture of that day.

**Reading Requirements**

If you come to a section of parallel accounts where Matthew, Mark, Luke and John all talk about the same incident (such as on pages 101-102), please read all four accounts.

If you do not have a harmony please read all the passages mentioned.

The way each writer covers his version of the event is based upon the theme of his gospel.

He will treat the event with his theme predominantly in view.

We’ll be relating the differences in emphasis each writer has in his recording of the event.

So please be sure to read all parallel accounts that you encounter and try to note the differences in emphasis that each writer chose.
BASIC DIVISIONS OF THE LIFE OF THE MESSIAH

I. A Preview of Who Jesus Is
II. The Early Years of John the Baptist
III. The Early Years of Jesus Christ
IV. The Public Ministry of John the Baptist
V. The End of John’s Ministry and the Beginning of Christ’s (largely in Judea)
VI. The Ministry of Christ in Galilee
VII. The Ministry of Christ Around Galilee
VIII. The Later Judean Ministry of Christ
IX. The Ministry of Christ in and around Perea
X. The Formal Presentation of Christ to Israel and the Resulting Conflict
XI. Prophecies in Preparation for the Death of Christ
XII. The Death of Christ
XIII. The Resurrection and Ascension of Christ
The Life and Ministry of Christ

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<td>(4 months)</td>
<td>(10 months)</td>
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<td>(8 months)</td>
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<td>(3 ½ months)</td>
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First “Year” | Second “Year” | Third “Year”
The Golden Rule of Interpretation

The Golden Rule of Interpretation: Dr. D. L. Cooper

When the plain sense of scripture makes common sense, seek no other sense; therefore, take every word at its primary, ordinary, usual, literal meaning unless the facts of the immediate context, studied in the light of related passages and axiomatic and fundamental truths, indicates otherwise.

In other words: The text of the Bible is to be taken exactly as read unless there is something significant in the context indicating that the statement should be taken some other way than literally, that is, as a symbol or figure of speech.

Key Words

- Unless: The plain meaning is not always the intended meaning
  
  John 10:7-9, “I am the door…,”

  Luke 13:32, “Go tell (Herod) that fox …”

- Symbols and figures of speech are recognized.

- Context: Context is king. The Bible only teaches one thing if kept in context.

- The Bible states 14 times that “There is no God.”

  Psalm 53:1 For the choir director; according to Mahalath. A Maskil of David. The fool has said in his heart, “There is no God,” They are corrupt, and have committed abominable injustice; there is no one who does good.

- Related Passages (cross references): the range of context: word → phrase → sentence → paragraph → chapter → biblical book → Bible → culture

- Axiom(atic): A self-evident or universally recognized truth*—Gravity exists.

- Fundamental: An essential or necessary part*—God is One.